

## Parker

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ance. You can't beat the Columbia River."

Salmon and halibut were among LeBrun's favorite foods at the Parker House. However, he admits the last time he ate there in 2009, the service and the quality of the food had gone downhill.

LeBrun is looking forward to the opening of The Black Pearl on the Columbia, a restaurant that is expected to open next spring. RSV Building Solutions, the general contractor of the project, is expected to break ground within 30 days at 56 S. First St.

LeBrun said he witnessed some of the Parker House

demolition because he is excited to see the positive changes near the waterfront.

"We have a brand new hotel there and a [pedestrian] tunnel under Highway 14," he said. "I love Washougal."

"Watching the demolition was wonderful," LeBrun added. "Get that out of there. Twenty-first century, here we come."

Melissa Emerson, of Washougal, also viewed some of the demolition.

She remembers celebrating good times with friends at the Parker House.

"I loved the decor of the inside and the fireplace," Emerson said. "It was a place for friends to gather. It was more than a place to enjoy the food and drink."

he said she visited the Parker House 15 to 20 times in the last five years.

It was a landmark and an icon," Emerson said. "It's going to be a lot better than it was."

Draig Cancilla, of Washougal, planned to purchase some materials previously used at the Parker House. He and his wife Colleen plan to open a Sears hometown store in downtown Camas in September.

While viewing the demolition of the Parker House, Caig Cancilla said work was progressing at his future business site at 216-224 NE Third Ave. That project included gutting the interior of the building that used to have a cabinet shop,

automotive dealership, feed store and bowling alley.

The Black Pearl on the Columbia LLC purchased the Parker House Restaurant for \$260,000 from Salah Inc., a partnership that included Victor Espinoza. The building and parking lot were sold for \$1.4 million.

Espinoza, a jockey best known for his 2002 Kentucky Derby and Preakness Stakes wins on War Emblem, purchased the Parker House Restaurant and the land north of it from Killian Pacific for \$1.6 million in 2004. He reportedly spent more than \$3 million total on the purchase, improvements, new equipment and legal fees before the restaurant reopened one year later. Prior to Espinoza's pur-

chase, the restaurant had been closed since 1992.

Ideas and suggestions for the new restaurant project

can be e-mailed to [info@blackpearlonthecolumbia.com](mailto:info@blackpearlonthecolumbia.com).

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